

**BRISTOL WARREN REGIONAL
SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
MONDAY, MAY 12, 2008**

The monthly workshop of the Bristol Warren Regional School Committee was held in the cafeteria of Mt. Hope High School, 199 Chestnut Street, Bristol, RI, on Monday, May 12, 2008. The Chairperson, William A. Estrella, Jr, called the meeting to order at approximately 7:13 PM.

Present: William A. Estrella, Jr., Marjorie J. McBride, Paul Silva, William M. O'Dell, Paul E. Brule, Diana B. Campbell, David L. Dugan, Karen A. Lynch and John P. Saviano; and Melinda L. Thies, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction; and Jane F. Correia, Director of Administration and Finance

Absent: none

OPENING BUSINESS

All present were invited to recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Mr. Estrella asked for all to remain standing for a moment of silence for Mrs. Donna Bettencourt-Glavin, former Assistant Superintendent, who recently suffered the tremendous personal loss of her husband.

Mr. Estrella announced that bond documents, expertly prepared by Sandra Mack, our bond counsel, were signed just before the meeting. As we near the end of our building projects, we are now in the enviable position where all our buildings are up to code, have up to date boilers and good systems of infrastructure and Mr. Estrella thanked Ms. Mack and her firm for all they do to keep us protected.

SUPERINTENDENT'S ISSUES

With Dr. Mara being away at a conference with the Governor of RI, Mrs. Thies reported nothing to discuss. There were no issues with the prom, the students were great. Mr. Estrella urged the Committee to attend Senior Week activities. He also mentioned that any member needing a parade shirt, should order it soon.

BUDGET/ FACILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. O'Dell reported that the projected savings of \$198,000 will be discussed at the Subcommittee meeting on Wednesday. The Subcommittee had discussed spending \$10,000 to purchase a new used vehicle with a plow; if these funds are taken from Capital Projects, the \$198,000 will remain in tact. Mr. Saviano further explained that this particular vehicle is in excellent shape and can be purchased for \$4,775 less than book; also, it was proposed as one of two vehicle purchases, the other being a 12' box truck with a Tommy gate and low mileage; this expense could be assigned to the

\$198,000. Mr. Estrella said the discussion of this funding belongs with the Subcommittee, who should make a formal recommendation to the full Committee. Mr. O'Dell stated that although fields and the language lab are listed under this agenda item, discussion will be open to whatever is brought up and he stressed that this is a one-time savings.

PERSONNEL/ CONTRACT NEGOTIATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. Silva had nothing new to report; the Negotiation Team is meeting next Wednesday; no negotiation sessions are scheduled; there is nothing new to report in Executive Session either.

POLICY/ COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mrs. McBride informed the Committee that the Subcommittee discussed and made recommendations for changes to policy on smoking, extra curricular activity participation requirements, use of electronic devices and clothing. Mr. Saviano mentioned that high school people would be coming to testify, which raised the concern of Mr. Estrella about protocol on recommendations. Mrs. Thies said she and Dr. Mara are meeting with high school administration to formulate a recommendation; any public commentary would be in response to the Superintendent's recommendation. Mrs. McBride said the Mt. Hope SIT Team is well aware of the proposal, the public is not. She summarized the issues:

1) Smoking – punishments for students caught smoking are different at the high school than at the middle school; need to align them; Mrs. Thies added that it should be directed more toward therapeutic intervention rather than punitive.

2) Requirements for participation in extra-curricular activities—Interscholastic rules are currently followed and students must pass only 60% of classes; the Committee is looking to change that to passing all classes; research was done on the practices of neighboring districts.

3) Use of electronic devices in school – now, cell phone, Ipods, etc. are not allowed to be used in school; there has been discussion on use in common areas.

4) Hats, kerchiefs and hoods – not allowed now; discussion about some allowances.

The goal is to bring the District into alignment for seamless transition between grades.

Without objection, Mr. Estrella said he will recognize anyone who comes forward for comment in regards to the Superintendent's recommendation at the time of the recommendation. Certain School Committee policies will be affected and will be revised accordingly. Mrs. McBride requested a list of SIT Team members; Mrs. Thies will oblige.

Mrs. McBride publicly announced the District has placed an ad for participants in our pre-K integrated classroom.

TECHNOLOGY TASK FORCE

Mr. Brule reported on the renovation of the new Tech Space at Kickemuit. The project is below budget due to changes—door free of charge because all lights across the top of the door are thermo pane glass; flooring changed to V.C.T.; sprinkler system to stay as is (supporting letter from Fire Chief). Doors and glass windows have not arrived yet; electric needs to be completed; ceiling will be completed on Saturday; air conditioning units will go in tomorrow; the ramp will be non-skid.

Mrs. Campbell reported nothing new for the Task Force who will be meeting again soon. Mrs. Lynch asked for an explanation for the email failure. Mrs. Thies explained the system was corrupted by an email; a staff member worked 24 hours searching each individual file; the Director of Technology can provide a more in-depth explanation.

Mr. Estrella asked for a report from the Director of Technology on the email breakdown as well as a written timeline for the tech move. Mr. O'Dell asked for an explanation of the difference between corrupted files and a virus and some details on why our system failed to prevent this from happening.

Miscellaneous

Mrs. Campbell asked who is responsible for moving classroom materials when a teacher transfers from one school to another. Mr. Estrella said our custodial staff does this and they work very hard over the summer months; friends and family help. Mrs. Correia added that teachers pack their own things and the District staff moves them. Mr. Estrella added that this community does a great deal of things out of the goodness and kindness of their hearts, so parents should not be afraid to ask if teachers could use a hand.

ADJOURNMENT – 8:18 PM

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Brule, seconded by Mrs. McBride, motioned to adjourn at 8:22 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Silva, Secretary

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